

Guidance for Adding, Closing, or Moving Programs for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are valued members of our district and their school. Houston ISD is committed to the equitable geographic distribution of programs across the district to provide students with disabilities access to appropriate education close to their home.

Adding a Program

A program is added when many students in the neighborhood or its vicinity require the services provided by the program. The program is typically located as close to the student's home as possible.

Moving/Closing a Program

Moving or closing programs can be disruptive to the learning of students. Recommendations must be made **thoughtfully** and **collaboratively** by the Principal, Special Education Program Specialist, and Senior Manager for Special Education prior to obtaining final approval (see below). Factors that must be considered include:

- The number of years students have been enrolled at their current campus;
- Number of years remaining before students transition to the next level;
- The impact of the students' disability on the move; and
- The impact of the move on the students' disability.

When a program is closed due to low enrollment and is moved to a nearby location, **parents must be kept informed throughout the process**. Parents and students must be given the opportunity to visit the new campus prior to enrollment. The sending and receiving school principals and their staff shall provide support to the students and their families during the transition.

An established program **may not** be closed or moved to another location unless at least one of the following conditions are met:

- The school is closing.
- The program has low enrollment and must be combined with another program in its proximity to remain viable.
- There are extenuating circumstances that have been discussed with and have approval of the following:
 - o Chief School Officer
 - o School Support Officer
 - o Senior Manager for Special Education



- Assistant Superintendent for Special Education
- Chief Academic Officer

Programs may not close or be moved due to administrative concerns that can be addressed. All students with disabilities have the right to a quality education in the least restrictive environment in the closest location to their home, and the district has the responsibility to provide it.

